

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
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# Town of Avon Massachusetts

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Adopted by the Board of Selectmen  
February 5, 2015

## **Emergency Closing of Facilities Policy**

### **Purpose:**

The Emergency Closing of Facilities Policy is created to provide efficient and consistent standards and procedures for the closing of Town facilities during emergency situations for the safety of employees and the public. Emergency situations include but are not limited to snow or other weather-related events. Closing of Town facilities is done in the interest of both public and employee safety.

### **Applicability:**

This policy applies to general government management, administrative, professional and support personnel, regardless of work location. It does not apply to Public Safety personnel and essential Department of Public Works personnel. Essential personnel are defined by the Department Heads and/or the Town Administrator or his or her designee and may change for each situation.

### **Policy:**

It is the policy of the Town of Avon to compensate employees who cannot report for work when the municipal building they work in is closed due to an emergency situation.

### **Procedures:**

#### **A. Emergency Situation Which Begins BEFORE Working Hours**

1. If an emergency situation occurs before or during the morning commute hours, employees should take a reasonable amount of time necessary to arrive at work safely. Employees who prefer to use accumulated vacation or compensatory leave time, in lieu of reporting to work, should be allowed to do so. In general, if Avon Schools are closed or delayed as a result of the weather, employees may use up to one extra hour in the morning beyond their normal start time to ensure a safe arrival at work, without loss of pay or use of accumulated leave time.
2. Unless the municipal building is closed by the Town Administrator or his or her designee, employees who do not report to work at all must use their own vacation or compensatory accumulated leave for all hours they were scheduled to work for the day.

3. In the event that a decision is made by the Town Administrator or his or her designee not to open the building, or to schedule a late opening, employees shall be notified by their supervisor as soon as possible prior to the start of their work day.

Appropriate notification shall also be made on voicemails, website and entrances to buildings. Employees will be compensated for the period that the municipal building in which they work is closed. However, employees who were previously scheduled to be on vacation, sick, or other leave for the period will be charged the appropriate leave.

#### **B. Limited Work Force**

1. When an event begins during the day and is forecasted to impact driving conditions, or otherwise impact operation of the facility, the Town Administrator or his or her designee may call for a Limited Work Force. This shall mean that, if possible, at least one employee in each department should remain in the office until the close of business, or until the building is closed by the Town Administrator or his or her designee.
2. As a practical matter, employees who live the farthest driving distance away, who are most at risk of injury during a weather-related event, or who must arrive somewhere at a specified time, such as to a child care facility, or who are otherwise concerned about driving, should be the first employees to be released. Employees so released will be paid for the remainder of their regular work day. To the extent possible the Limited Work Force should rotate.
3. When a Limited Work Force is designated by the Town Administrator or his or her designee, non-exempt employees who are required to work when other employees are released will be entitled to receive, in addition to their regular pay for that day, banked compensatory time for time worked after the designation. This compensatory time must be used at an agreed-to time with the department head as to not cause overtime.
4. The Town Administrator or his or her designee, at his or her discretion, may close certain offices during a Limited Work Force Situation. If the office is closed at the discretion of the Town Administrator or his or her designee, no employees of any closed office need to remain during the Limited Work Force Designation.

#### **C. Change of Work Location**

1. In the event that a decision is made by the Town Administrator or his or her designee not to open a particular building, or to schedule a late opening, employees of that particular building may be required to report for duty at secondary location if their function can be accommodated at a secondary location.
2. Employees who are required to work from a secondary location will not receive additional compensation.

#### **D. Change of Work Duties**

1. During an emergency, employees may be required to perform additional or different duties then outlined in their job description. This includes but is not limited to, answering phones in the Emergency Operation Center and other operations as directed by the Town Administrator or his or her designee or the Emergency Management Director.

**E. Availability of Employees**

1. In the event that a decision is made by the Town Administrator or his or her designee not to open a municipal building, or to schedule a late opening, employees shall be accessible by phone for immediate needs. If Department Heads are on a scheduled vacation, a subordinate shall be accessible by phone for immediate needs. The Town Administrator or his or her designee shall be notified in advance of the subordinate assigned to cover for the Department Head.